

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing frozen or refrigerated half-boiled noodles, comprising the steps of:

boiling a measured quantity of beta noodles into a half-boiled state, in which ~~the~~ a moisture content of the half-boiled noodles is within ~~the~~ a range of 45 to 60 percent as a whole, until outside surfaces of the beta noodles are processed into an outer alpha layer;

packing the half-boiled noodles in a sealed container comprising a food bag made of synthetic resin to hold ~~holding~~ the half-boiled noodles in a hermetically sealed condition to bring the sealed ~~space~~ container into a substantially saturated steamy condition;

slow-cooling the sealed noodles to permeate moisture ~~into the core from the outer alpha layer~~ of the half-boiled noodles into an inside beta part of the half-boiled noodles and to equalize a moisture content; and

preserving the ~~cooled~~ slow-cooled noodles in freezing or refrigerative storage.

Claims 2 and 3 (Cancelled).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing frozen or refrigerated half-boiled noodles according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein

the half-boiled noodles are brought into ~~a~~ the hermetically sealed condition when the temperature of a greater part of the half-boiled noodles, except ~~the~~ an outside, is at least 80°C.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing frozen or refrigerated half-boiled noodles according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 4~~ or 4, wherein

~~the a~~ slow-cooling speed of the sealed noodles is 1 to 5°C/min and ~~the a~~ slow-cooling time is 15 to 90 minutes.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing frozen or refrigerated half-boiled noodles according to ~~one of Claims 1 to 5~~ Claim 1, wherein the preserving comprises:

~~the noodles held and slow-cooled in a~~ locating the half-boiled noodles in the hermetically sealed condition ~~are put in~~ a packaging container for freezing or refrigerative storage ~~at the point~~ within 90 minutes after ~~the a~~ start of the slow-cooling.

Claim 7 (Withdrawn): An apparatus for manufacturing frozen or refrigerated half-boiled noodles, comprising:

a weighing unit for weighing beta noodles including dried noodles or uncooked noodles in a unit quantity of package;

a boiler for boiling the beta noodles into a half-boiled state in which the moisture content is within the range of 45 to 60 percent to preprocess the surface thereof into alpha;

a wrapping unit for hermetically sealing the noodles boiled by the boiler into a sealed container of which the interior is in a substantially saturated steamy condition;

a slow-cooling unit for slow-cooling the noodles wrapped by the wrapping unit at a cooling speed of 1 to 5°C/min until the moisture permeates into the core of the noodles; and

a storage unit for preserving the slow-cooled noodles in frozen or refrigerated storage.